



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA

Ian Waples

Ian Waples commenced his working life as a cadet draughtsman in 1955 with the Main Roads Department, Queensland, at 15 years of age. He spent his working life with Queensland Main Roads, firstly as a draftsman, and following study through night classes at Queensland Institute of Technology, graduated as an engineer in 1970. He worked in Brisbane on the design, construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, with four years in Emerald from 1975 to 1979.

For his last five years with the Department, he was its inaugural Heritage Manager, responsible for the Department's extensive heritage collection in Toowoomba. In keeping with his interest in heritage matters, he obtained a Graduate Diploma in Community Museum Management in the early 1990s, and retired in 1998.

Over 24 years he has had extensive involvement with engineering heritage. His membership with Engineers Australia's heritage panel in Queensland began in 1988 and has continued ever since. Currently a corresponding member, he held the position of Queensland Panel Chairman from 1996 to 1998. In 2003, he organised the successful national EHA conference in Toowoomba on behalf of the Queensland panel.

For almost a decade from the mid-1990s, he served on the Cobb & Co Museum Management Committee, and on retirement worked there part-time for several years.

Always one for detail, perhaps his engineering background and determination to discover historical fact sowed the seed for the very detailed research in his recent book, *Isis Downs Station the 1910s - A Decade of Development*, published in 2012. It is Ian's first book, and the first book to debunk the myths surrounding the woolshed and road train at Isis Downs Station in central western Queensland. In 1913 the largest shearing shed in Australia was built at Isis Downs to replace the one destroyed by fire in September 1912. It is semi-circular in shape and of steel construction, and has been the subject of many stories relating to its design and usage.

Ian Waples' research has brought out of the woodwork archival material including original documents, plans and photographs. This book is an important contribution to our knowledge of the development of the wool industry and of Queensland history.

